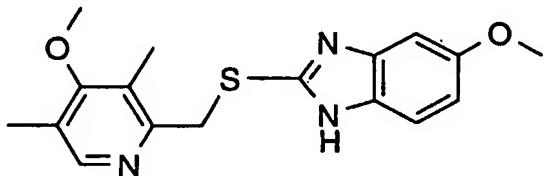


CLAIMS.

1. A process for the manufacture of 5-methoxy-2-[[[4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl]-methyl]-thio]-1H-benzimidazole of formula I

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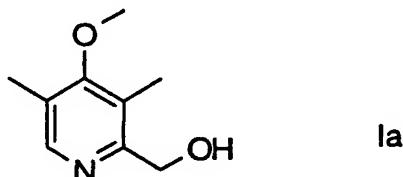
from (4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)-methyl alcohol comprising the following reaction steps carried out in a consecutive order in one main solvent system without isolation of the intermediates formed during the process

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Step 1:

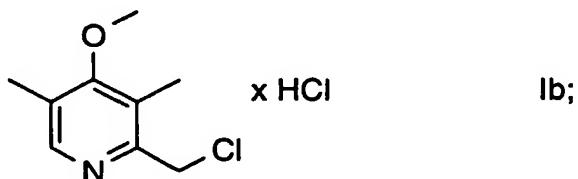
reacting (4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl alcohol (pyrmethyl alcohol) of the formula Ia

15



with a chloro-dehydroxylating agent, providing (4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl chloride (pyrmethyl chloride) of the formula Ib

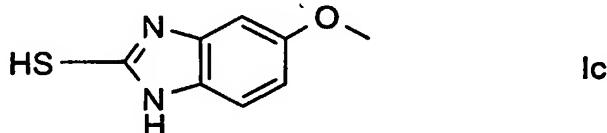
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**Step 2:**

reacting (4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl chloride of the formula Ib, prepared in Step 1 above, with 2-mercaptop-5-methoxybenzimidazole (metmercazole) of the formula Ic

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in the presence of a base, providing 5-methoxy-2[[4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]thio]-1H-benzimidazole (pyrmetazole) of the formula I

10 characterized in that the solvent system, common for the whole reaction sequence, comprises water immiscible organic solvent with a specified amount of between 0.3 and 5.5 mg water / ml water immiscible organic solvent added.

2. A process according to claim 1 wherein the water immiscible organic solvent is  
15 toluene.

3. A process according to claim 1 wherein the water immiscible organic solvent is ethyl acetate.

20. 4. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that the specified amount of water is present from the start of the reaction according to Step 1.

25. 5. A process according to any one of claims 1 and 4, characterized in that the specified amount of water is added during the charging of the chloro-dehydroxylating agent in the reaction according to Step 1.

6. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the specified amount of water is added after charging of the chloro-dehydroxylating agent in the reaction according to Step 1.

5 7. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that the specified amount of water is 0.3 – 5.0 mg/ml of water immiscible organic solvent.

8. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that the specified amount of water is 0.4 – 2.4 mg/ml of water immiscible organic solvent.

10 9. A process according to claim 1, characterized in that the specified amount of water is 1.0 – 2.4 mg/ml of water immiscible organic solvent.

15 10. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the reaction according to Step 1 is carried out at a temperature between -5°C and +45°C.

11. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the temperature is between -5°C and +35°C.

20 12. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the temperature is between +10°C and +35°C.

13. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the temperature is between +25°C and +35°C.

25 14. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the chloro-dehydroxylating agent is thionyl chloride.

15. 5-methoxy-2{[(4-methoxy-3,5-dimethyl-2-pyridinyl)methyl]thio}-1H-  
30 benzimidazole (pyrmetazole) prepared according to any of the claims 1 to 14.